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A WHOLE NEW WORLD

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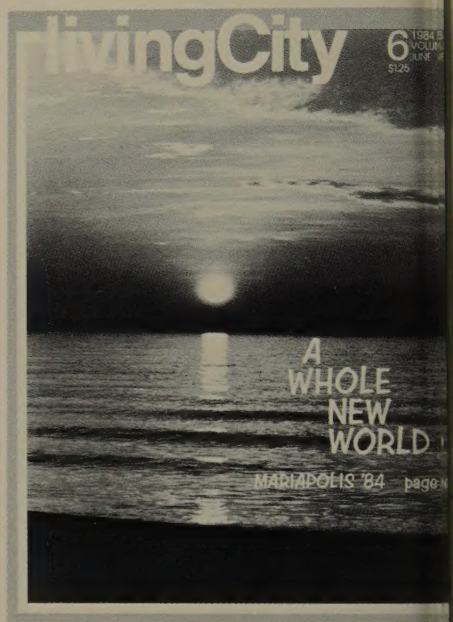

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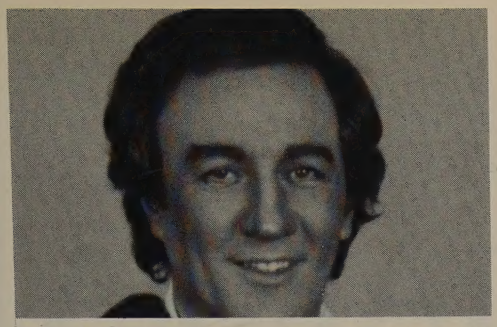
THE KEY TO DIALOGUE: Fifty bishops from twenty countries gathered at the Mariapolis Center of Rocca di Papa, Italy. The theme of their conference: Jesus crucified and forsaken, key to unity among all.



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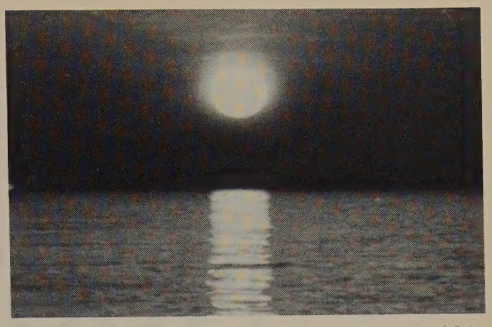

26 *MARIAPOLIS '84: A whole new world is a united world. We can build it together. See page 26 for details on the summer gathering of the Focolare Movement.*

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NOSTALGIA FOR UNITY

At the doors of the East

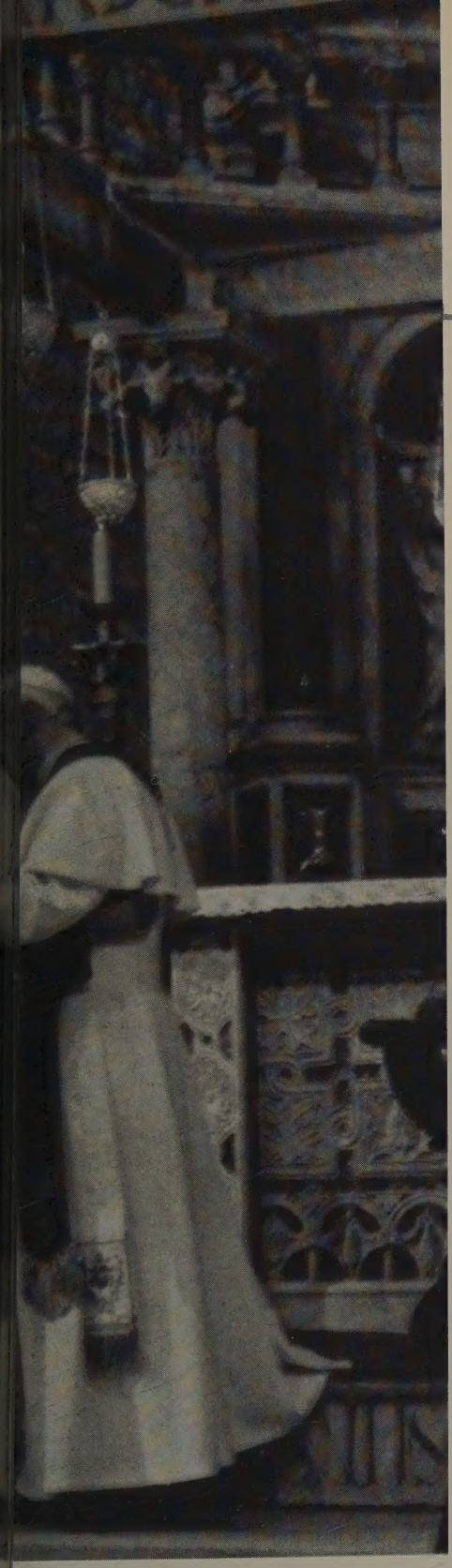
A recent pastoral visit of Pope John Paul II to Bari, Italy took on an important ecumenical significance as a meeting took place between the Pope and Metropolite Konstantinidis, Orthodox Metroplitan of Myra in the Basilica of Saint Nicholas. The following are excerpts from the Pope's address on that occasion, rich in his encouragement for unity.

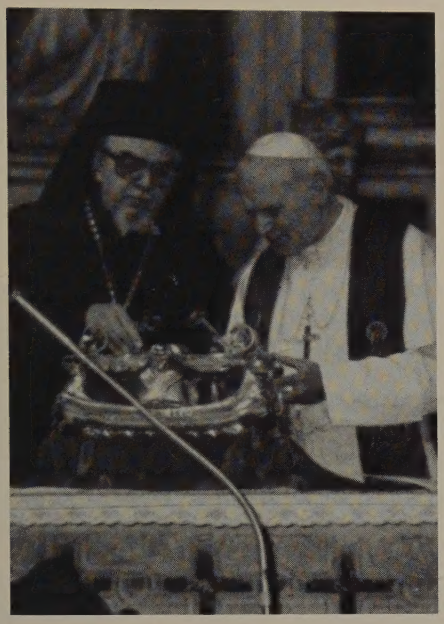
Dearest Brothers and Sisters:

Today the Bishop of Rome comes to Bari as a pilgrim to the tomb of a saintly bishop of the East. Like every pilgrim he comes to hear and to translate into a prayer the appeal which echoes from a place of pilgrimage. Here there is mysteriously prolonged a remarkable testimony of sanctity which has enlightened the hearts of millions of faithful of East and West. Here the memory of faith brings to life again the presence, not cancelled by death, of a man who lived in the East between the third and fourth century and whose life was a magnificent expression of that special, unmistakable kind of Christian geniality which the Holy Spirit has bestowed on the brethren of the East for building up the Church.

But before all else the Bishop of Myra, known today as Saint Nicholas of Bari, reawakens in us a nostalgia for unity. It is not however a nostalgia for the past whose memory has inexorably faded through the course of time: but it is the expectation of a future which has been promised us and which is for us the task and labor of the present.

The unity of the infant Church was born of the blood





Pope John Paul II and Metropolitan Chrysostomos Konstantinidis embrace at the entrance to the Basilica of Saint Nicholas in Bari, Italy. Many representatives of the Oriental Churches were gathered for the occasion of the Pope's visit. The ecumenical significance of this meeting was symbolized by a ceremony in which John Paul II and the Orthodox Metropolitan of Myra both poured oil into a lamp to feed a single flame. This was to represent the longed for union of the East and West, because the oil poured by the Pope was from Apulia in Italy and the Patriarch's was from Anatolia in Asia Minor.

of the Cross and sealed on Pentecost morning in the fire of the Spirit. The Church is called to be fulfilled in time, in obedience to the Spirit of her Lord who illumines and sustains her: the Church too is subject to the dramatic tension of growth, to the stern law of development.

In the upper room in Jerusalem the Church received the perfect, even if embryonic, form of her unity, and the task to live out this unity to full maturity in the troubles of history (cf. Eph. 4:16).

The Bishop of Rome comes as a pilgrim to the tomb of the saintly Bishop of Myra and in him he pays homage to the Church of the East.

Unity is the mature fruit of the Spirit: it is the form that only love can give to life; it is not absorption nor even fusion. The two sister Churches of the East and West understand today that without mutually listening to the profound reasons that underlie in each one the understanding of what characterizes it; without a mutual gift of the riches of geniality, which each one bears, the Church of Christ cannot manifest the full maturity of that form received in the Upper Room at the beginning. The only path that can be followed is through the widening of mind and heart, which each meeting presupposes.

In this direction an enormous pastoral work must be carried out, whose root is the fidelity to its identity and its vocation.□

Reprinted from L'Osservatore Romano *English Edition, 20 March, 1984.*

THE SPIRITUALITY OF UNITY

UNITY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

by CHIARA LUBICH

In this issue we are presenting the third of the talks prepared by Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare Movement, on its spirituality of unity.

Summary of the preceding talks:
Today the Holy Spirit is underlining in various ways the priestly prayer of Jesus: "That all may be one." The word "all" expresses the aspect of universality while the word "one" denotes unity.

In order to understand these concepts more fully, we returned to the Old Testament and saw that the people of Israel, who knew the "one" God, already had certain ideas about unity and universality, elements which are very strongly present in the recounting of the creation of the cosmos and the story of the great flood.

Besides this, two other factors which are integral elements of the human being, come very strongly into relief in the "primeval history" of the Bible. They form a unitive base for the entire human family: its relationship with God and its communitarian nature.

Unity and universality are also two characteristics of Noah, and the Bible shows all the nations on earth as descending from his stock. These people, however, are numerous and strong; they defy God and violate their creature-Creator relationship as we see in the story of the Tower of Babel. God intervenes by dispersing them, but since he humbles them, he saves them.

In the choice of Abraham, however, the father of the chosen people, in whom the story of salvation begins, God foresees "all the nations on earth."

In this way, the unity of humanity and its universality continue in evidence in the Old Testament.

If, in the primeval history of the Old Testament we find very pronounced allusions to the universality of all the nations, the books which follow concentrate on the choice of Israel. References to Israel and its God are to be found everywhere.

Everywhere there is mention of the constitution of this people, of its infidelity, its punishments, its conversions, its hopes, which often mean triumph over other nations.

The mark of universality, however, is still present because God, through his prophets, made it known to Israel that his intention was to extend his salvation "to the ends of the earth."

This universality, therefore, is not simply a cosmopolitan attitude as can be found among the intellectuals and merchants of all times. Neither is it a mere humanistic dream of fraternity unhindered by territorial limits.

"The universality of the Israelites is that of a chosen people who become aware of the universality of their God."[1]

As time passes Israel understands that the power of Yahweh is not bound to one territory or group of people, that Yahweh cares for all people since they form one family, and that Yahweh calls all people to specifically recognize him.

This universal call by God to all peoples is proclaimed in Deutero-Isaiah (Is. 44 ff.)

(Continued on page 6)

UN Photo

(Continued from page 4)

in which the chosen people, for the first time, appear ready to share with "outsiders" the worship of their God.

The knowledge of God and the faith spread not by force but because of the integration of other people, for reasons of war or plagues, into areas in which the ancient Hebrews lived, and it spread above all because of the collective testimony of the chosen people.

In fact, the prosperity of Israel (as is seen in Psalm 67), and the misfortunes (cf. Ezechial) of this people who repented and were forgiven (cf. Deutero-Isaiah) attracted the attention, the respect and also the conversion of pagan nations.

The book of Jonah opens up the mentality of Israel to the universality of salvation. It demonstrates warm sympathy towards pagans. Jonah is the figure of those who are unwilling to share their state of being "chosen" with others and refuse to admit that salvation also reaches out to the impious, the "godless". A prisoner of his own prejudices, he hampers the plans of God. The mercy and the saving will of God, however, extend to all people, even to those of the enemy city of Nineveh. Its citizens repent and the plan of God is fulfilled all the same.

In the book of Isaiah there are various passages which present the universality of the people of Israel. The following is an excellent example of one of its highest expressions:

On this mountain the Lord of Hosts
will provide for all peoples
A feast of rich food and choice wines,
juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines.
On this mountain he will destroy
the veil that veils all peoples,
The web that is woven over all nations;
he will destroy death forever.
The Lord God will wipe away
the tears from all faces;
The reproach of his people he will remove
from the whole earth; for the Lord has
spoken *(Is. 25:6-8).*

The universal character of the banquet is immediately recognized: all the people on earth are invited to gather on Mount Zion, in Jerusalem, at the festive banquet, a joyful banquet (this is the significance of the rich food and choice wine). Besides this, he will remove every sign of mourning and sadness (the veil that veils and the web that is woven over), and will eliminate death, tears and shame.

The joy, the praise "of all peoples" is not in contrast with that of Israel but rather echoes it. In this wider context the "just" and the "godless" are in contraposition, but for sure they do not represent Israel and the other nations.

Texts such as this may seem of marginal importance in the context of the whole Hebrew Bible, but they assume a completely different value if they are considered in the much wider perspective which opens out onto the Gospel.

1) P.E. Dion, Dieu Universel et peuple elu, *Paris 1975, pag. 12.*

To be continued

THE KEY TO DIALOGUE

A short interview with Bishop Klaus Hemmerle of Aachen, West Germany, at the convention of the Bishops who are friends of the Focolare Movement. The encounter dwelt on the four aspects of today's dialogue, namely, the strengthening of unity among Catholics, the re-establishment of unity among Christians, the relationship with the faithful of other religions and with all people of good will.

by GUGLIELMO BOSELLI

In mid February, fifty bishops from twenty countries of the world gathered at Rocca di Papa for a few days of reflection on a particular—and central—theme of the spirituality of the Focolare Movement: "Jesus Crucified and Forsaken, key to unity among all."

It was the eighth of such meetings of bishops who are friends of the Focolare Movement, and so far the best attended. They asked Chiara Lubich, founder of the Movement, to introduce the topic with a meditation expressing the meaning of her own and her companions choice as the measure of love for their life that of Jesus' love for humanity. It is the measure, she explained, which is given by the greatest anguish Jesus suffered on the cross, when he cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" His death on the cross, feeling abandoned by the Father, is Christ's highest, most divine and heroic lesson of what love is.

Love such as that is not only the key to our personal union with God: that total, poverty of self, it is also the key to unity with others.

"We cannot understand and share our neighbor's sorrows, if we are rich of our own worries and concerns. If we want to make ourselves one, we need to be poor in spirit. Only then is unity possible. To learn this great art of being poor in spirit, we look to Jesus Forsaken. Nobody is as poor as he is—he, who after having lost almost all his disciples, after having given us his mother, gives his life for us as well, and experiences the terrifying sensation of being forsaken by the Father himself.

Pope John Paul II pauses to speak with Bishop Klaus Hemmerle of Aachen, West Germany, promoter of the encounter.

L'Osservatore Romano Arturo Mari

the Pope's welcome

A "souvenir photo" of the bishops who are friends of the Focolare Movement was taken with John Paul II during the general audience of Wednesday February 8. The Pope greeted them with a "warm welcome" on the occasion of "this annual, and by now traditional, convention." "Your participation in the Movement," he said, "is an excellent opportunity to come together in a particular atmosphere of serene fraternity and religious recollection, and reflect on the richness, the responsibility and the commitment of the pastoral charism you have received with the 'imposition of hands', and at the same time to share more and more the gifts which the Holy Spirit has made available for your sanctification and for the sanctification of all brothers and sisters in the faith you come in contact with."

Participating at the convention of Rocca di Papa were, among others, Archbishop Adrian Simonis, Primate of Holland; Archbishop Giovanni Cheli, Permanent Observer of the Holy See at the United Nations, and Archbishop Stanislaus Lokuang, President of the Catholic University of Taiwan. There were also present some eminent personalities of the Roman Curia, among whom Cardinal Sebastiano Baggio, Prefect of the Congregation of Bishops, and its Secretary, Archbishop Lucas Moreira Neves; Cardinal Opilio Rossi, President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity, Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, President of the Secretariat for Christian Unity; Bishop Joseph Tomko, Secretary of the Synod of Bishops; Bishop Luigi Dadaglio, Secretary of the Congregation for the Sacraments; Bishop Alois Wagner, Vice-President of the Council Cor Unum, and Bishop Cesare Zacchi, President of the Pontifical Ecclesiastic Academy.

This measure of love is the key not only to union among Christians of various Churches, but also to the dialogue with believers of other religions and with all men and women of good will, and even with those who have lost their faith. These aspects of dialogue were dealt with in this perspective by the bishops during their four-day convention.

Bishop Hemmerle of Aachen, West Germany, promoter of the gathering, commenting on it contributed some interesting answers which were in part broadcast over the Vatican Radio and published in the Roman Observer of February 15. The complete text follows.

What brought bishops of so many countries to Rocca di Papa?

It was simply the desire to be always more closely united to one another, to the Pope, not only in a functional way, but also in a vital way. All of us were attracted by this new and at the same time so ecclesial and so authentic spirituality of the Focolare. The reality of Jesus Forsaken and of the presence of the Risen Lord in our midst is a spiritual experience which is very meaningful to us because of our collegiality and our service toward Church unity.

With reference to the theme dealt with in these days, would you explain the relationship between Jesus Crucified and Forsaken and unity among all?

What Jesus' abandonment on the cross really expresses is the cry of today's humanity. I think that behind all the rebellion and hopelessness of many people there is an ardent longing for God. There is the question "Oh God, where are you, why aren't you with us?"

Even those who protest against God have this desire deep inside. I believe that if they discover a God who loves in this way, a God who wished to share in their experience, they will truly find that this is indeed their God, the God of our day, the God who makes himself a bridge between them and the Father who seems to them to be hidden and so far away.

If we live forgetful of ourselves, if we "make ourselves one" [1] as the Son made himself one with us, we will feel urged to reach out to those who are still searching for God. I think that if they in turn experience this kind of love, a love that accepts them fully, they will no longer feel like strangers. It is so marvelous to be able to share in this experience of today's humanity and at the same time maintain the greatest union with God who is totally obedient to the Father and looks only to him."

What has been your experience of these days?

We made a commitment to recognize the countenance of Jesus crucified and forsaken in all those who are forlorn, who suffer doubt, who protest. Thus we become a living bridge for them and a means for their encounter with God's love. At the same time we feel that the most important thing for us ►

In the foreground from the left: two bishops from Benin who attended the gathering—Bishop Vincent Mensah and Bishop Nestor Assogba. In the background Archbishop Adrian Simonis, Primate of Holland.

bishops is that we be "one" among ourselves and form that affective and effective "collegialitas" that the Holy Father has been talking about. As Jesus said and St. Paul emphasized, unity is the presence of God which attracts the world, and offers even to those who do not know him the opportunity of meeting him.

Can you see some signs of progress in the reconciliation among all people?

Yes, I do see such signs in the Church. Some people say that the thrust of the Second Vatican Council has suffered an arrest and has slowed down, but I don't think so. There are so many positive signs.

I see them for instance, also in the ecumenical activities of the Focolare Movement. They have established ecumenical schools for their Catholic and Anglican members of the Movement in England, for their Catholic and Lutheran members in Germany. The participants study the documents which are the fruit of the theological dialogue now in progress among these Churches. The common love for Jesus crucified and forsaken brings about a new mutual understanding. This takes place, however, without neglecting the truth. If all are empty of self, so to say, each has the capacity of grasping the riches of the tradition of the other and, at the same time, of sincerely sharing his own conviction. It is in this way that reconciliation, the journey towards unity, progresses.

A somewhat similar experience is being realized in the Movement in the realm of dialogue among religions. In the Third World the Church is surrounded by so many experiences of different cultures and different religions. Here, too, whenever the people experience Christian love, they become interested in Christianity. This interest leads to dialogue. They realize that, while being convinced Christians, their new friends also know how to listen, how to discover and appreciate the other's spirituality.

The dialogue becomes deeper and so does the mutual effort to face materialism and atheism by giving a common witness of love set in motion.

There seems to be progress also in the dialogue and in the rapport with non believers. I recall very well last year's "New Humanity" international convention in Rome on March 20. After listening to all those who gave witness to a renewal of relationships and structures through the life of the Gospel, many atheists came forward to say, "This is what we're looking for."

"I believe that where people love one another as Jesus loved us on the cross, with a love that urges one to become empty of self in order to live the other and where this is done in full obedience to the will of God, new paths open up towards a greater unity, towards reconciliation, towards a fresh new hope for the world." □

1) Cf. 1 Cor. 9:22.

Carlo Bini

A lesson in grace and courage

by VERA GIANNINI

The whole audience was in an uproar. Some booed and jeered, and shouted insults; others cried bravo and even tried to applaud, but the booes were louder and drowned them out. It very nearly came to blows.

At first it was like any other night at the opera. The curtain of the Metropolitan Opera in New York had risen on Ponchielli's La Gioconda, and Placido Domingo in the role of Enzo Grimaldi had sung beautifully throughout the first act. But then the trouble began. Even though nothing appeared to be wrong with his voice, Domingo declared that he was ill and unable to continue. His "cover" for that night was tenor Barry Morel, but as soon as news of the crisis came out, he was nowhere to be seen.

Sitting in the audience, actually enjoying himself, was the unwitting victim, tenor Carlo Bini. He had been engaged by the Met to sing this role on two nights during the following week, and since he had had no rehearsals as yet, he had come to familiarize himself with that particular production. He knew the role, of course, but wanted to see who was standing where, which way they moved, which scene took place on the right and which on the left side of the stage, and so on. He had spent the day with friends, had done no vocalizing, no warm up, and had even enjoyed a hearty dinner just before curtain time.

Now, as everybody vaguely familiar with opera routine knows, the day before a performance is like a retreat. Phones are disconnected, there is no talking, no heavy eating, no drinking, but plenty of resting, vocalizing, perhaps gargling. Each artist has his or her own ritual. Carlo Bini had done none of it on that particular day. Yet, when he realized that it was either he or no one to carry on the show, he said his yes.

"I have always felt great loyalty towards the theater as an institution," he said, "because if it's done the way it should, the theater is an enrichment to humanity. It reflects life, but from a higher plane, and it does have a basic morality. So I never hesitated to give it my all, especially in a crisis. And if, instead of the Met, it had been any obscure theater in the sticks, I would have done exactly the same."

So, he let himself be dragged into a dressing room, put into an ill-fitting costume and pushed onto the stage, with his head reeling, his heart throbbing, and his ears deafened by the onslaught of hostility that greeted him before he even opened his mouth. People had come to hear their favorite superstar, they had spent a lot of money for their tickets, and they wouldn't accept anything else. To add to his misfortune, Bini had to start with the famous second act aria Cielo e mar ... (Sky and sea ...), one of the great tenor arias of all time, and in his traumatized state it obviously did not sound like Domingo, or, for that matter, not even like Carlo Bini when he is in good form.

The pandemonium grew and grew. He didn't know which way to turn, and were it not for mezzo-soprano Mignon Dunn who kept a firm grip on his arm, he may have fled in panic. This aroused great hilarity in the audience who evidently felt that, since they couldn't get the great singing they had expected, they might as well have some fun. And very few realized that while they were having such a good time, someone up there on stage was being crucified.

The disaster didn't end there. After angrily reprimanding the audience for their lack of respect toward the composer, the conductor, Giuseppe Patane, also threw down his baton and left the performance to a substitute conductor. This was construed as an act of protest against ►

Photo courtesy Columbia Artists

Carlo Bini: "I'll go into the smallest villages where people never had a chance to hear good music, and I'll sing for them."

Bini, while in fact Patane and Bini had often worked very well together and continued to work together after the incident. (Last year Patane asked Bini to sing for him in Caracas, Venezuela, and the opera was none other than La Gioconda!)

The people who gave him such rough treatment were actually the same who had applauded him many times on this same stage, over a period of five years. He had come to the Met after making a name for himself on the international scene, from the San Carlo of his native Naples to Milan's La Scala, to Vienna, Hamburg, Stuttgart, and most major theaters in the world. His repertory is unusually vast and diversified. In addition to the traditional fare of Italian bel canto and varismo, he is familiar with the German, Russian and French repertoire. His official Met debut was in Bizet's Carmen, but an unofficial debut of sorts preceded it with a Rigoletto performance in New York's parks before an audience of 100,000 which, he recalls, was not only "exciting" but landed him the official Met contract. He also sang in Chicago, San Francisco and, as recently as February 1984, Miami, Florida.

Talking about Miami 1984, however, means jumping ahead of the story, because after that fateful night in October 1982, Carlo Bini's ordeal was far from over. The New York papers reported the incident in every painful detail, after which the Italian press picked it up and blew it out of proportion. Within a day or two the story was known all over Europe and as far as Australia, often distorted to the point of stating that Bini was booed off stage, which of course was untrue. He did carry the show to the end, as evidenced by the letters he received by many a grateful listener.

"Those letters," said Bini, "made up for all the suffering we went through, Bunny and I," referring to his wonderful wife Margaret, called Bunny, who stuck it out with him throughout the ordeal and all his ups and downs before that.

There were letters directed to him, to the Met manager, to the New York Times, all protesting against the "disgraceful" behavior of the audience, apologizing for it, praising his courage, and thanking him for saving the performance. But one letter expressed it best of all: "My husband, friends and I were at the Met last Wednesday and watched you go through the most trying and traumatic evening a performer could experience. I apologize for the cruel rudeness from certain factions. I commend you not only for your courage, but for your dear and ingratiating attitude throughout the ordeal. You are a gentleman as well as a talented professional. God bless you, Signor Bini, and may you hear nothing but Bravo! from your future audiences...." "Most of us in the audience were most appreciative of your coming to the rescue of Mr. Domingo. Under the circumstances, your performance was admirable." "I have seen you perform many times in San Diego and have enjoyed each time...." "... What I will remember long after the sounds of that unwarranted booing are forgotten is how you came right back afterward and gave it your best shot, and how nicely you performed in that last act...." "...I got a lesson in grace and courage that night I shall not soon forget. Thank you and best wishes for a successful performance on the 22nd."

The two scheduled performances did indeed go very well. In the beginning he couldn't help feeling a certain strain—even his friends who had come to watch the performance lost a heartbeat or two at every noise, even a cough, from the audience. But after a beautiful, lyrical Cielo e mar, particularly on the last evening, everybody relaxed and he was greeted with applause and bravos. And the following morning the Binis could leave New York with big sigh of relief.

Still, what had happened, happened, and couldn't be undone. The bad publicity had gone ahead of them and the future looked bleak indeed. On their arrival in Milan, where the Bini's now live, one of his best friends, an artists' agent, told him: "My dear Carlo, your career is finished."

But already, during those upsetting days in New York, Bini foresaw this possiblity. "Maybe it's really over," he said. "Maybe no major opera house will ever engage me again. But I don't mind. I'll go into the smallest villages where people never had a chance to hear good music, and I'll sing for them."

In the year and a half that passed since, Bini sang at La Scala, at the Arena in Verona, in Lugano, Switzerland, in Stuttgart and other cities in Germany; in a big Spontini bicentennial celebration in Iesi, Italy, plus the already mentioned *Gioconda* in Caracas. And he is expected back in Milan and also in Hamburg, among other cities, where he'll sing the tenor part in Puccini's *Messa di Gloria* on German T.V. and Eurovision. (In the past, German television featured him in a special ninety-minute solo concert of songs and arias, in a Strauss operetta and in a documentary about his life and career.)

Talking about last year's events, Bini suddenly recalled what he had said about going to sing in the poorest villages off the beaten path. "Here I was giving up everything" he reminisced, "expecting never to set foot in a big theater again. But see what the Good Lord did? He made me sing in them anyway. You really cannot beat Him in generosity. It is enough to give Him so little, and He gives you so much.... Now I feel closer to God than ever, and I'm happy. Bunny who, like me never lost her faith, has also come out stronger from all this. We go ahead together."

Bini feels that he can also help other singers who either have faced or may have to face similar experiences. Many of his younger colleagues did, in fact, come to him to ask how, after being treated so shamefully, he could live without hating anybody. But he didn't have to tell them. His example spoke for itself and made them see that it is something greater than our egos that gives us the strength we need; that when we have a deep interior life, we can overcome everything, and in the end disarm all the evil around us.

"I knew I was getting myself into trouble. I saw the cross waiting for me and I embraced it. That's why the Heavenly Father loves me. He really does, I'm not kidding!" With these words there seemed to be nothing more to say about the whole story. But then Carlo Bini wanted to add one more thing: "And, if necessary, I would do it all over again!" □

DIARY OF FIRE

Many of our readers are already familiar with Igino Giordani writer and statesman, a man whom Pope John XXIII called a "shining light" and Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare Movement, has described as a "great soul, always open to humanity."

He has written many books and the following are excerpts from Diary of Fire, *published by* New City Press. *It is a record of personal notes and reflections which reveal Giordani's conviction that all are called to a life of perfection.*

September 1, 1958

If the summit of religion consists in service, it is useless, a waste of time and of peace, to stay delving into one's self in quest of injured rights and slights received. If religion is, practically speaking, service, there are not any rights injured. There are only duties to be performed: and rather we should complain when we stop ourselves from loving God by serving our brothers.

Seen this way, every supposed curtailment of rights or disregard of titles would be seen as a confirmation or an approval, so that the man who disregards or offends us is co-operating with us, imbuing our day with the flavor and the color of the blood of Christ crucified. Then when we seem to be abandoned, we are with him on the cross, we are abandoned with him: we are the one Christ crying out.

January 27, 1959

How can one get bored in life if the *City of God* is there to be built up? How can one have any dread of old age if it is a growth towards heaven, a continual progress towards the solution? And the solution is joy. Eternity: Life.

February 18, 1959

I too say, and so many times, that it must no longer be I who am but Christ who is in me: he must be I. I say too that I must be a void to be filled by God, a nothing in order to offer myself to the All. But then, I spend a large part of the day curled up in my own self, talking banalties and practicing deceits of the world; thus, I am in myself, that is,

Igino Giordani (second from left) with a group of young people at the Mariapolis Center of the Focolare Movement in Rocca di Papa, Italy.

nothing, in emptiness. Because I must busy myself for a large part of the day with earthly things, I make my soul live on a level that is half, if not wholly, subterranean.

And instead I ought to fill myself with God even when I am attending to the things of the world: allow Christ to live, always, to the very last minute of the twenty-five hours, whatever I may be doing: I should be, in every thought and relationship, impregnated with the divine; so that the divine becomes my nature and I act as an expression of Christ, with the heart of his Mother, with the standards of the Church.

Then everything is simplified: fears vanish, suffering takes on a meaning; nature becomes a temple; the created being leads me to its Creator. There is no need for you to be anxious or to get angry with men, since you love them; and in this way, in addition to everything else, you neutralize them in regard to yourself and endow them with value in regard to God.

May 3, 1959

Betrayals, falls, disappointments ... hurricanes, as it were, which sweep away edifices built up with silent care, in the deep nights of idolatrous worship of one's own self. These cataracts which humiliations are, cause anguish and yet they cleanse. They are purifying waters which sweep away the castles of pride and the showcases of vanity. They clear a space for sight and for action, uncovering the reality of the relationship which eludes me: I, nothing—God, all. They are accordingly a growth in the vision of God, an increase of his presence, a richer phase of his action. Grace establishes itself on the ground that has been cleansed and cleared: true life grows.

A new vision comes of it, almost scientifically, with the science of God—clear vision, making possible the elimination of suffering from disappointments, ingratitude and slights. These were present because in my neighbor I saw myself. Now in my brother, Christ is seen once again: even in the depraved brother: for Christ came for sinners. And the one thing that matters is to also love the depraved for love of him: to love him also in the depraved; so that life is transformed only into love of God. As I love him amidst labors, so I love him amidst insults; the essential thing is not to let oneself be separated from him by paper screens, gaseous screens of rancor and vanity. □

WORD OF LIFE

"For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved."
(Jn. 3:17)

The word of life for this month tells us that God did not send his son into the world to condemn it, but to save it through him.

This is an affirmation of tremendous importance. Jesus reveals to us the true countenance of God. He is love, and mercy is the most touching aspect of this love. Love moved the Father to send his Son into the world; and in everything that Jesus says and does we touch this boundless love of the Father. This love reaches out to every individual, it is extremely patient, it goes beyond all our faults, it is love which forgives and redeems.

It's enough to think of certain marvelous episodes in the Gospel revealing the love of God for sinners (the Samaritan woman at the well, Zaccheus, the adultress, and so on), or of the parables which speak of mercy (like the story of the prodigal son, for example).

"For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved."

In order to better understand these words of Jesus, it is useful to bear in mind the sentence which precedes them. It says, "God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life" (Jn. 3:16).

"Everyone who believes in him..."

The infinite love of God, therefore, calls for an answer on our part; that is, that we believe in his Son, that we believe that Jesus takes us back with open arms every time that we return to him, believing in his love, sincerely sorry for having offended him with our sins.

"For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved."

Oftentimes God's mercy is not taken too much into consideration.

One reason is that a great number of people refuse to recognize the reality of sin and therefore of their own sins. If sinners refuse to see themselves as such they no longer feel the need for the Savior, in the same manner as people who believe themselves to be healthy don't feel the need for a doctor. Their attitude cannot but automatically close the door on the mercy of Jesus, who came, not for those who consider themselves just and self-sufficient, but for those who recognize that they are sinners and incapable of performing any good without his help (cf. Lk. 5:32-32).

Another reason is the consequence of not fully believing in God's mercy.

Many Christians have a belief in it which comes from their study of catechism. Oftentimes, however, their knowledge has remained at an intellectual level and is not a reality in their everyday life. The end result is a lot of time spent finding justifications for one's conduct, or thinking, with regret, of one's sins, more out of pride than out of suffering at the thought of having offended God, ultimately getting discouraged. All this shows that they trust more in themselves than in the infinite mercy of Jesus and in the power of his grace.

To believe in divine mercy, in fact, means actually being convinced that Jesus will blot out our sins if we ask his forgiveness. We can thus immediately begin again to follow him.

"For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved."

How can we live this word of life?

We must firmly and unconditionally believe in the mercy of Jesus. We need to offer him the gift of our limited self each and every time we come face to face with our failures and our weaknesses. We must do it with the conviction that this gift is not something superficial, but is an act of pure love which will attract his forgiveness and grace, provided that we resolve to start again immediately on the right track. Then this gift is the most beautiful answer to his love.

EXPERIENCES

The following are experiences in living the Gospel which some of our readers have shared with us.

Furthermore the mercy of Jesus comes to us in a particular way through the Sacraments, especially the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist. Therefore, we should live the sacrament of Penance always more fully, opening up our hearts with ever greater simplicity, without fear or shame, as if we were truly in front of Jesus. We should receive the Eucharist with ever greater awareness and sincerity.

In fact, one of the effects of the Eucharist is that of purifying us of all the imperfections and traces of sin accumulated each day, provided we receive it with the desire of growing in the love Jesus speaks of.

"For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved."

The Gospel says: "There will be more rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine virtuous men who have no need of repentance" (Lk. 15:7).

Wouldn't it be better for all of us sinners, for sinners we always are, to come home over and over again to the mercy of God, also to be able to give him, while still on earth, some joy?

Couldn't this be a way to attract to our little planet, torn to pieces by a thousand evils and dangers, subject to wars and threatened with atomic destruction, the blessing of God?

Chiara Lubich

THE OUTING

We were living the word of life "So then, if you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering" (Mt. 5:23). It was very meaningful for me, because it made me realize how important it is to resolve any disunity, no matter how small, as soon as possible.

My experience began when some relatives invited us on a Sunday outing. We accepted the invitation, with great joy thanking God for giving us the opportunity to get together again with these relatives after several months of various difficulties which had kept us apart. Now everything seemed to be taking on a more positive outlook. We felt as if we had been given an opportunity to begin again.

Then an incident happened and every effort made to build unity seemed to be lost. We were driving along the highway and I asked the driver of the car if I could use the seat belt in order to feel more secure. To my great surprise my request was not very welcomed at all, in fact, the driver reacted very strongly to what I had said. The conversation then took on a very unpleasant tone for all and the harmony was broken because everyone had a different idea about it. Personally I felt responsible for ruining all the effort that had gone into making that an enjoyable outing. The trip back home was silent and the atmosphere uncomfortable. I felt we couldn't say goodbye without doing something to help the situation. With great effort I decided to break the "ice." I went to the person who was driving to offer him a contribution for the expenses of the day and suggested we find another occasion to meet again. I hoped we could just forget the incident. He wouldn't accept the money and in fact, he threw it on the ground.

I really felt crushed. It cost me everything to restrain myself. All of a sudden I remembered the word of life, "... if your brother has something against you ..." I could not remain indifferent. I turned around and, overcoming myself, I went to this person and asked him to forgive me and not to leave upset. I stretched out my hand and very unwillingly he gave me his and left.

The following day I felt a little worried but I decided to leave everything to the mercy of Jesus and I experienced a sense of great peace. Towards the middle of the week I re-

ceived a beautiful answer. My friend came to my house; his face was completely different. He was smiling and apologizing for what had happened a few days before. He thanked me for what I had done and told me that my actions had really made him think. It was a beautiful moment of reconciliation and it was a lesson for us all.

H.S.

REPAIRING THE DAMAGE

I am in construction and on one occasion I found myself working with four tradesmen. One of these guys continually talked about other people, putting one person down for one reason, another person for another reason. Probably a lot of it was in a joking way, but certainly it was criticism and afterwards I would make comments about it. I would say, "I think that guy you were talking about is really a straight guy" or, "I never saw that particular thing in that guy."

Well, one morning, I was unusually tired. I was a little clumsy with my work, and I damaged something I was working on. All of a sudden I became the person to be ridiculed. I could take it for a little while, but at a certain point I just had to say something back. When I did that, I realized that charity was lost. I had only said one phrase to him, but coming from me it went right through him and hurt him. There was no unity and the whole afternoon was difficult. That evening when I left

Out on a limb

I remember when he first came to my class. A boy of fifteen—quiet and rather shy. He didn't know anyone, but he started to do well in my class. He averaged between a B and a C. He seemed enthusiastic about school and he performed rather nicely all school year. When asked asked by his counselor about his achievement, I spoke highly of him. There really seemed to be no problem.

Then the next school year rolled around. And I immediately noticed a change in this boy. He was totally disoriented and when I called on him in class, he would start to say something which had no bearing on the question whatsoever. Then he would doze off. This took place almost every day. Finally one day, I decided to send him to the nurse. She called me later and said he seemed OK—just a little tired. Still I was not pleased; I felt I had to really make an effort to help this kid-go out on a limb for him—or "go the extra mile." I went to see his counselor. She assured me she'd speak with him—especially since there was a sudden drop in his grades, not to mention his high absenteeism. In class I tried to be particularly sensitive to his needs. More than any other student, he seemed to be lost and this really concerned me.

One day his counselor revealed to me the "whole story"—broken home, very confused situation, and a young boy who was pushed in the middle of it all. As his teacher I felt something more had to be done to help him. He was failing all his subjects due to his all too frequent absences. I felt it was a situation wherein the boy was being punished for things which were not his fault.

So I approached the Vice-Principal. I explained the whole story to him: high absenteeism, sudden drop in grades, sleeping in class, and so on. When I finished the Vice-Principal said, "I'm glad you told me. No one has ever referred the boy to our child-study team so we could help him out. Would you?" I immediately said yes and did just that. From that day on things began to happen. All the teachers, counselors and staff who had anything to do with the boy met together to discuss how to help him. Later I was told that, for the first time ever, both parents came in and had a conference with the Vice-Principal in order to straighten things out.

The mother then called the school the next day to thank everyone involved for caring about her son. The meeting had been extremely beneficial.

Since then, all of us have banned together to try and save this one boy from what might have been a tragedy. He himself even told me once, after learning about his failures in all his subjects due to absences, "Now I have nothing more in life to look forward to. I have nothing, what will I do?"

So going the extra mile for him paid off. He's still struggling but we teachers are with him trying to help him along. We think he'll make it!

G.G.

work, I realized that I really didn't have to say the things I said. This lack of charity was so strong that when I stopped to make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, I realized that I had judged that man. "I can't ever judge anyone," I thought. I made a resolution that the next day when I saw this guy I would look at him with "new eyes."

The next morning I went to work and it started out as the day before. So whenever he said something to me, I would smile and answer him with respect. By coffee time everything was becoming more normal. Later on in the morning, he made a comment to me when we were alone. He said, "Don't judge me by what I say, but by what I do." He was making an apology and I apologized too. We became much closer after that because we had established a relationship on another level.

H.B.

FAMILY LIFE

Weakened family life is one of the greatest social ills of our time.
The "New Family" Movement has as its aim to bring the Focolare spirit of unity into family life, so that each family will be deeply united within itself and with other families.

IT WASN'T OUR STYLE, BUT...

We have quite a situation in our family with our youngest son. It has been going on for some time now. He has a unique personality and for a while our relationship was "incompatible" to use his word. At one point he even chose to leave home. My husband and I realized that things could not go on like this. Whenever there was a family outing or get-together he never joined in 100%, as if what the family did was of no interest to him. In our desire to resolve this situation we decided that *we* could become interested in what he was doing.

His greatest interest was automobile racing and there he spent all his free time. My husband and I were not particularly thrilled about this sport because it wasn't out style, but we decided we would make it ours out of love for our son. He had never invited us to come with him to the track, maybe because of the differences there were between us, so we decided to invite ourselves. He was a little surprised and a bit on the defensive but off we all went and to our own surprise we discovered that it was quite an interesting sport. When the day was over we asked if we could come again and he seemed happy to bring us with him. I was reminded so much of that phrase of the Gospel, "For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost" (1 Cor. 9:22).

Over time a rapport like we have never had before with our son has been developing. He has started to invite us along on his own initiative, and not just to the races. He comes to us often just to talk and visit and has a real interest in us and the family.

R.L.

AN IMPORTANT VISIT

My wife's father had a series of heart attacks and strokes which rendered him partially paralyzed. His whole life style had to change from an active sales career that was full of travel and freedom to a daily routine that really doesn't vary much from hour to hour. His morning consists of a light breakfast, exercise, and a long line of T.V. game shows.

Because of his life style many people who come to see him come to tell him of things happening outside the home. I judge that very few, if any, people just sit and listen to him. I guess that's because he doesn't have much to talk about except past history or his physical problems.

I was visiting my in-laws one week and my mother-in-law sort of pushed me into the room where my father-in-law was laying. He was, as usual, watching T.V. game shows. I sat down on his bed and began watching T.V. with him. I also felt quite resentful at that moment because to be truthful I didn't want to be there. As we watched T.V. he would occasionally talk to me and ask me questions and I would respond with very short answers. At a certain point I realized that I had caught only a very small part of what he had been saying. I had been more interested in a game show on T.V. I resolved in myself to start immediately to love. In order to give all of my attention to him I couldn't concentrate on both him and the T.V. I asked if I could turn it off. "Now we can talk and I can listen to you better," I said. He leaned back on the pillow and began to talk. He talked for over an hour and I listened to him with everything I had. When he was finished he looked at me and said, "Thanks for understanding." Our relationship grew with a big leap because of that incident.

T.R.

Photo courtesy Italian Cultural Institute

"All I can say is that I forget the past and I strain ahead for what is still to come; I am racing for the finish, for the prize to which God calls us..."

Saint Paul, Phil. 3:14

A conversation with

So far we have followed the path of research into the fundamental truths of the faith by means of articles written by imaginary correspondents in the first Christian centuries: the development of Trinitarianism being the theme.

In the first centuries the debate saw the emergence of a few outstanding personalities who delved in depth into the subject, and defended the true faith from distortion and error.

In this month's "report" our "correspondendent" recounts events in the life of Dionysius, the Bishop of Alexandria from 247-264 A.D.

Today, once again, we are in Egypt. To be lying down on a straw pallet on the outskirts of Alexandria where even the Nile seems to be stagnating, is in itself punishment enough. However it pales into insignificance in comparison with the exasperation you feel when you long to be hundreds of miles away. To be precise, when you long to be in Antioch, where the Synod is being held at this very moment, which will pronounce on questions of faith over which you have worked yourself almost to death for innumerable years. I would not be here but for a deep affection for the man whose conversation I hope to record; a former disciple of the great Origen: a man born to wealth, of pagan parents, but converted to the following of Christ because in him alone he found true riches and truth ... I mean, of course, Dionysius—Bishop of Alexandria.

Dionysius, like so many of his illustrious predecessors, succeeded to the See after having been head of the famous school that is here in Alexandria. He doubtless never dreamed of what Providence had in store for him as bishop of this torrid city! The stories that are told of him are so enthralling and so packed with adventure that I decided to seek him out.

Introducing myself to the bishop, I said: "I don't wish to be a nuisance, but I have just arrived from Caesarea in Palestine, where I heard much about you, and I bring you the greetings and the peace from that church. I am a Christian, I'm married, and we have just had a son born to us whom we are going to call Eusebius. I'm longing to see him again. I promise you that I won't detain you very long. But first can I be of service to you in any way?"

He looked at me serenely. I felt as if I were miraculously transported into a different world by the peace which his eyes spread around me.

"Welcome in the name of Christ," he replied. "There is one kindness that I would ask of you, if you can do it. I have just finished writing some letters which ought to reach Antioch while the Synod is still sitting. Could you possibly go on as far as that, once you have seen your son again?"

"Yes, by all means," I answered. "What are they discussing at the Synod?"

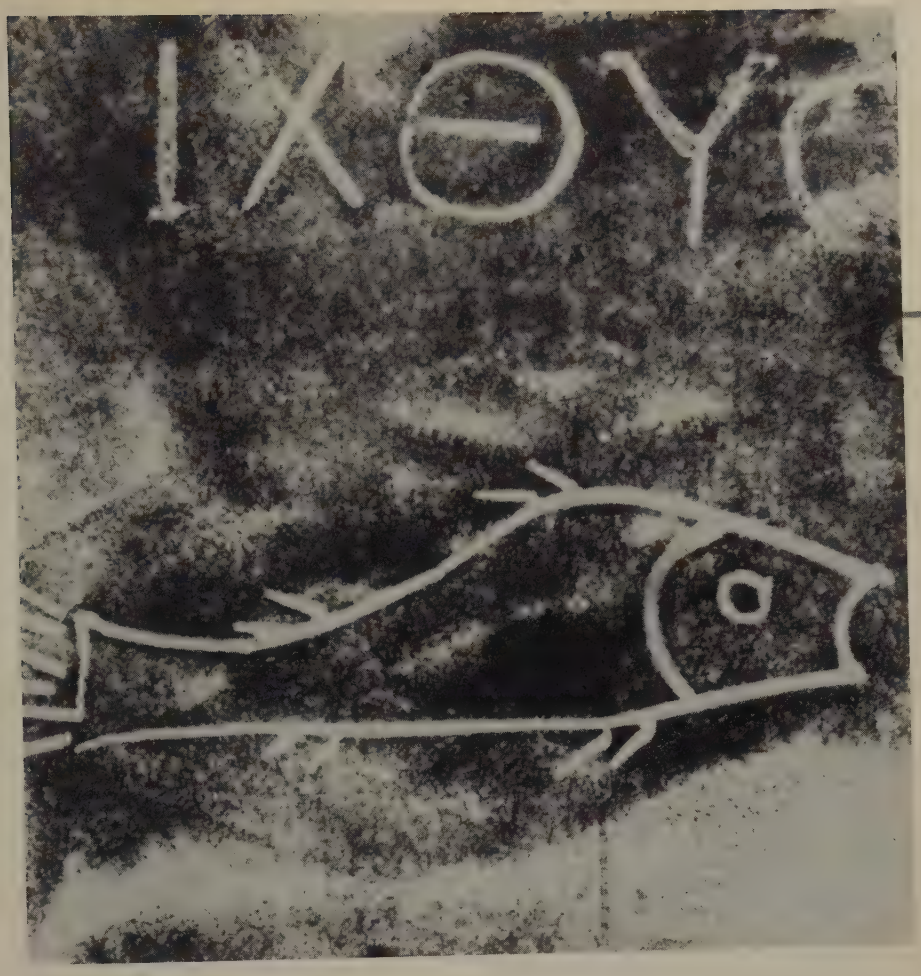
The pain it cost him to answer was clear upon his face. "In that city which had as its bishop the holy martyr Ignatius: a man who lived, one might say, only for unity; the most precious possession that the Church can have: there is now a bishop who is a heretic. His name is Paul of Samosata. This man, besides being the bishop, is also an official of the state a "Viceroy" of Queen Zenobia of Palmyra. This man is more of a politician than a bishop. One cannot be both a man of the world and a bishop; and that is, perhaps, why he strayed from the true faith in regard to his explanation of the Holy Trinity.

"Queen Zenobia (and God forbid that she had any hand in the murder of her husband), aspires to be the empress of the eastern empire, and to hold it—she says—on behalf of her son—the Prince Vaballath—and to have absolute power firmly in her own hands. May be she feels affronted by the fact that our God is not an absolute monarch, but a Trinity united in love.

"At any rate, for some time now, this Paul, and others like Noetus of Smyrna, Sabellius

Dionysius

by SILVANO COLA



Graffiti from the walls of the catacombs.

the Libyan, and Theodatus of Byzantium, have been saying that to profess to a belief in One God means that he is alone in his rule and absolute (they call themselves "Monarchians," in fact.) For them, to speak of "the Word," and "Holy Spirit," it amounts to no more than describing a variety of "ways" or "modes" used by the Father for revealing himself to us. Consequently they teach that Jesus is not "the Incarnate Word of God" but only a man invested with divine power ... and that is *not* the faith of the Church!"

Traumatic times

These last words were spoken almost in a whisper; and I had the impression that he was holding back tears.

For a while I did not dare to break the silence which had fallen between us. I tried to wipe the sweat from off his brow, and to freshen the air a little I fanned him with his towel. At last I could contain myself no longer and, even at the risk of distressing him still further. I ventured to ask: "Is it true that you also were in some trouble over your teaching on the Holy Trinity?"

He looked up at me and gave a slight smile: "God is easier to love, than to understand, my son, "he replied." It is also much more profitable to adore him than to try to explain him! And I have most surely tried to love him! Perhaps that is why I felt that those whom I have mentioned had erred most grievously from the faith of the Church.

"I tried to make them realize this, of course ... but our church here was living through such ... traumatic times...."

I waited a moment in silence, but it was though he heard and saw things that were forbidden to me. "I heard that you even risked martyrdom," I said. "Would that I could have confessed my God with my own blood?" he murmured almost inaudibly.

"Did you know that when the edict of persecution was published, soon the emperor's accession, the Prefect of Egypt—his name was Sabinus—lost no time in sending one of those who constitute Rome's secret police—a so-called "Wheat Inspector"—to arrest me? I heard about it from a Christian who worked in the prefect's courts, so I did not leave my house—hoping that the man would arrive quickly. Instead the man scoured the whole city and countryside! I heard that they even looked for me among the reed-beds of the Nile! Apparently he never dreamed that I was waiting quietly in my own house!

"After four days my family and I were persuaded to go with one or two of my clergy—Caius, Festus, Peter and some others—to a community in the country. It was there that the soldiers discovered us; arrested ►

us, and started back to Alexandria with us. On the first night we halted in the village of Tapsoris.

A dramatic rescue

"Listen to what happened next. One of our Christians—actually it was my son Timothy—was not with us when we were arrested. Not finding us when he returned he became alarmed and started to search for us. Seeing all the agitation a peasant asked what all the fuss was about. The peasant was actually on the way to a wedding, so when he got there he told them the whole story. 'They've captured our bishop Dionysius, and have probably put him in prison,' he said. 'The Romans aren't going to do that to us Egyptians,' they replied at the top of their voices.

"By now it was night. Those peasants, yelling their heads off, fell on the village like an avalanche! The handful of Roman troops panicked and took to their heels.

"We were sleeping on the ground when all the noise broke out, and we thought we were being raided by bandits! We called out to them, 'Take our clothes and anything else you want.' They retorted, 'What do you mean? We've come to set you free!'

"For my own part, at that moment, I would rather have been martyred there and then, and have died for Christ! However, seizing me by my arms and legs, they hoisted me on the back of a donkey and, with the priests, marched us off to safety."

It was a pleasure to listen to him sharing his adventures with me, and I didn't say a word—hoping that he would continue. After a sip of water he continued: "It is difficult to understand God!" he said again. "I repeat, it is easier to love him than it is to grasp 'how' he loves you! You say you are ready to do anything for him—he says 'No!' to you! The agony of indecision goes on and on—and you go on accepting that this is his way of loving you. You don't understand it at the time, but you always understand it afterwards.

"Twelve years passed before I was again imprisoned. During that time, as if the work of my ministry did not keep me busy enough, I had to cope with all the heresy that was going around....

"It was just then that I was accused of being a heretic. Certain people went to Rome and told Pope Dionysius that I was teaching that God was—more or less—three distinct entities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. According to them I had maintained that there were three gods! Me! Of all people! A devoted disciple of Origen! Maybe in my anxiety to safeguard the true Christian faith against the teachings of Paul of Samosata, and Sabellius, I exaggerated some aspects of my teachings, but I have always held that there is but One God because Father, Son and Holy Spirit are a Unity—that is, One."

"What did Pope Dionysius say? Did he reprimand you?"

"Well, not just at that moment! You see the whole situation had worsened. The Emperor Valerian, prompted by that fanatic minister of state Macrinus had declared a new war against the Christians. That was the time that I was arraigned before the Deputy Governor Aemelian. He wanted me to worshiop what he called 'the natural gods of the Empire'! I was far from well; in fact I had not been well enough to go to the Council of Antioch. I had a perfect opportunity for declaring that I adore only the God of Jesus Christ ... but every time I saw martyrdom within my reach, it eluded me.

"Together with Eusebius, who had been one of the first to stand by me in persecution, I was exiled to Kephron in Lybia; banned from holding any assemblies, or even entering cemeteries. He knew well that we like to meet in the catacombs near the bodies of the martyrs.

"Well, to make a long story short, as it happened, that was just the opportunity that God had been preparing for us so that we could take his Word to those people! You can just imagine how many of those pagans flocked over to us!

"We had just barely formed a Christian community there when Aemelian had us transferred to Maereotis. What a dreadful place, desolate and unhealthy!

"When Valerian was ousted I was able to return to Alexandria, but there was a civil war

raging, and there was a plague on top of all that. In circumstances like that people realized what it meant to be a Christian. Laity and priests, all in unity, were tireless in their efforts. Wherever anyone suffered from the plague, there people ran to help. Their charity and brotherly love could almost have been deemed excessive. The sick were cared for to the very end. I saw what is meant by 'carrying one another's burdens.' This service rendered to one's neighbor, at the cost of life itself, produced some true martyrs, I can assure you."

"I don't suppose that at times like that anyone had much time to spare for making points of dogma!" I said, half jokingly."

"You would think so!" he replied. "Yet it was just then that we were giving our greatest witness that God is Love. It was at that very moment that each was acting as a father to his neighbor, loving him as he loved himself, and I can assure you never so much as at that moment did we experience such peace and so much joy. Is not that 'living the trinity'?"

"I get it!" I exclaimed, "The trinity is not just something to be thought of as being 'in heaven', way out beyond us!"

A final clarification

We remained silent for a long time. I could see that his eyelids were closing with fatigue; and it was with a twinge of conscience that I attempted my last question. "But how did things end up with Pope Dionysius?"

The good old bishop smiled up at me from under half-closed eyelids: "Oh, he only asked me for a few explanations! You know, I think that over there in Rome they are not like us here—splitting hairs over every 'how' and 'why'! The Chair of Peter is truly the protector of the faith of the Church. Pope Dionysius, my august namesake, only wanted to know whether I taught the Creed of the Apostles as it had been handed down to us.

"Incidentally," he added, suddenly opening his eyes wide, and looking hard at me. "Do you know the 'Exposition of the Faith' which Gregory of Neo-Caesarea, in Pontus, has written? You know the man I mean; the one people are already calling 'The Miracle Man', because of the extraordinary things he's doing?"

"Yes, indeed," I answered. "We recite it by heart every Sunday: 'There is only one God: The Father of the living Word... and so on. Did you know that Gregory spent five years in my city, Caesarea of Palestine? And I'm sure you know that—like you— he was a disciple of Origen."

"That is so; that is so," murmured the bishop. "And he is every inch a saint. It is said that his 'Exposition of the Faith' was dictated to him by none less than St. John the Evangelist, at the request of Mary, the blessed Mother of the Lord. I am told that she appeared to him in person. That is the first time in two and a half centuries of Christian history that we have heard of a vision of Mary...." His voice faded away in wonderment.

"But what about Pope Dionysius?" I urged. "What did he say in reply?"

"Oh, I wrote him a long letter which fully satisfied him. If you like you can read it for yourself. I have a copy here somewhere. To tell you the truth I can't go on any longer. That scroll on the desk there is what you want."

The voice dropped suddenly. I looked back from the desk. The Bishop of Alexandria was asleep. I opened the scroll and read, as it were, his very soul—the statement of his faith—to Pope Dionysius. As I read it I was moved to tears; everything seemed so obvious! What a saint! What an intellect! "God exists from all eternity, the Father ... the Son also exists from all eternity ... so too the sun and its light. They are neither before nor after one another: they are simultaneous, even if the sunshine does come from the sun, and we call it the sun's daughter ... God is not the Father before he has begotten the Son, but he is the Father in the very act of begetting the Son, and they are one and the same nature...."

I changed the water in his jug, took the letter that I was to carry to Antioch, and slipped silently from that hut which seemed now to me to be a sanctuary. □

MARIAPOLIS 1984

The 1984 Mariapolis will be an extraordinary opportunity to learn, to grow, to share and above all to experience unity which is the basis and goal of the Christian community. You, your family and friends and all those interested in knowing more about the Focolare spirituality are cordially invited to attend.

The Mariapolis are the summer meetings of the Focolare, held every year, for those who wish to come into contact with it.

For one week the Mariapolis offers to hundreds of people of all ages and walks of life a very full program that includes general sessions with talks on the spirituality of unity, sharing of experiences in living this spirituality, documentaries, meetings in small sharing groups and recreational programs. The Mariapolis is a time for prayer and recollection. The celebration of the Eucharist is at the center of each day and all participants gather together at the conclusion of the activities for evening prayer.

Children have separate activities which involve them in the life of the Mariapolis through various spiritual and recreational programs. Special programs are available for teenagers as well.

The week, however, is more than the sum of its parts. It is an experience of how life, also every day life, can be transformed if love and unity are at its foundation. When the Mariapolis ends, people find that it was not only a tremendously enjoyable week, but they have experienced a way of living that they will be able to bring back home.

SOUTHWEST:

New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, New Mexico
July 1, after supper - July 7, after breakfast

Home of the main campus of New Mexico State University, Las Cruces is a pleasant blend of indian-spanish-anglo heritage and modern technology. A city of 60,000, Las Cruces is the second largest city in New Mexico. Its most distinguishing geographical features are the Organ Mountains to the east and the Rio Grande to the West. The university is located on the south edge of Las Cruces and is 40 miles from El Paso, Texas.

MIDWEST/EAST COAST:

Mansfield University
Mansfield, Pennsylvania
July 29, after lunch - August 4, after breakfast
(Box lunch provided at no additional cost.)

Located on a hill overlooking the borough of Mansfield the University boasts of magnificent views, woodlands and farms. Soaring hills and fertile valleys enfold the college in the grandeur of Pennsylvania's northern tier. Situated near the intersection of U.S. Routes 6 and 15, the college is 14 miles from Wellsboro, PA; 28 miles from Elmira, NY; 31 miles from Corning, NY and 48 miles from Williamsport, PA.

NORTHWEST:

Western Washington University
Bellingham Washington
July 22, after supper - July 28, after breakfast

Western Washington University is situated in the hills overlooking the city of Bellingham, the bay and many of the San Juan Islands. Its architectural blend of the traditional and the modern reflects the majestic beauty of the Pacific Northwest. Modern freeways bring Seattle within easy driving distance. Bellingham is situated 22 miles south of the Canadian border and 90 miles north of Seattle. The nearest large airports are in Vancouver, B.C., Canada and Seattle-Tacoma, Washington. Don't forget, you'll have to cross the border if you land in Vancouver. Bellingham is readily accessible by Greyhound bus and Amtrak train.

QUEBEC: **(in French only)**

Universite de Sherbrooke
Sherbrooke, Quebec
August 5, after supper-August 11, after breakfast

Those interested in participating in the French Canadian Mariapolis are asked to contact the Focolare Centers in Toronto, Canada (see inside back cover).

CARIBBEAN: **(in Spanish only)**

The Mariapolis for the Caribbean will be held in Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic. Space is limited. Invitations are being sent only to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

SOUTHWEST MARIAPOLIS
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, New Mexico
July 1, after supper to
July 7, after breakfast

NORTHWEST MARIAPOLIS
Western Washington University
Bellingham, Washington
July 22, after supper to
July 28, after breakfast

MIDWEST/EAST COAST MARIAPOLIS
Mansfield University
Mansfield, Pennsylvania
July 29, for supper to
August 4, after breakfast

GENERAL INFORMATION

Special services provided:
Children's program — Nursery facilities

Simultaneous translations:
Southwest, Midwest-East Coast Mariapolis: Spanish
(When you check for translation please indicate how many people will be needing it.)

Priests should bring their own alb and stole for concelebration.

We cannot provide accomodations prior to the beginning or after the ending of the Mariapolis.

If small children who are not required to pay for accomodatons (see each Mariapolis for age limit) use a bed, they will have to pay for it.

Young people under 18 years of age unaccompanied by a parent must have a permission slip signed by a parent.

Pets are not allowed in dormitories.

Daily rates available for those not attending the whole week.

Accommodations are in college dorms with double occupancy rooms. A limited number of single rooms are available for an additional charge.

THE 1984 MARIAPOLIS

"A WHOLE NEW WORLD"

A whole new world is a united world.
In order to build it, however, we need to learn how to go from death to life, from darkness to light, from discord to peace, from a scattered crowd to a united people.

We need the key . . .

The theme for this year's Mariapolis:
Jesus Crucified and Forsaken, key to unity.

YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS

_____

_____

PLACE STAMP HERE

FOCOLARE MOVEMENT—MARIAPOLIS

_____

_____

WHERE TO SEND YOUR REGISTRATION:

FOR SOUTHWEST MARIAPOLIS TO:
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 71701
Los Angeles, CA 90071
OR
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 32302
San Antonio, TX 78216

FOR NORTHWEST MARIAPOLIS TO:
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 82626
North Burnaby, B.C.
Canada V5C 5W5
OR
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 71701
Los Angeles, CA 90071
OR
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 302 - Stn. T
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M6B 4A3

FOR MIDWEST/EAST COAST MARIAPOLIS TO:
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 496
New York, NY 10021
OR
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 53426
Chicago, IL 60653
OR
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 302 - Stn. T
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M6B 4A3
OR
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 4958
Washington, DC 20008

TERMS OF PAYMENT

Registration: The registration fee not included in the accommodations fe Please note fees and deadlines f registration and accommodations und specification for each Mariapolis. La registration fee: US$5 additional.

Your cancelled check is your receipt

Cancellations in writing received pri to dates indicated for each Mariapo will be given full refund. After this da money is tranferable to another pers but not refundable.

Daily rates available for those not tending the whole week.

To register for the 1984 Mariapolis please fill in the registration form

1. Tear off page.
2. Cut along dotted lines.
3. Fold back lines nos. 1 and 2.

Before filling out this **REGISTRATION FORM**
please read carefully detailed information
on both sides of the form

there's a place for you at the 1984 MARIAPOLIS

SOUTHWEST MARIAPOLIS

Las Cruces, New Mexico

July 1, after supper to July 7, after breakfast

GISTRATION FEE

lts ..... US$100
ried couples attending with
children under 18 years ..... US$150
gistration fee for youth not included.)
th: 14-17 years ..... US$ 30
13 years and under ..... US$ —

COMMODATIONS: Meals and lodging:

lts ..... US$110
th: 14-17 years ..... US$110
8-13 years ..... US$ 90
2-7 years ..... US$ 80

accommodation fee for children under 2 unless they use a , in which case the fee is US$30. Please specify on the istration form if so desired. **No trailers permitted.**

RMS OF PAYMENT

gistration fee due by **June 8.** Full amount to be paid by **June 22.** l refund for cancellations received in writing by **June 25.**

MULTANEOUS TRANSLATION: ☐Spanish.
ease check if needed and specify number)

NORTHWEST MARIAPOLIS

Bellingham, Washington

July 22, after supper to July 28, after breakfast

GISTRATION FEE

ults ..... US$100
rried couple or family maximum
th children under 18 years ..... US$175
uth: 11-18 years ..... US$ 20
2-10 years ..... US$ 10

registration fee for youth under 18 who are accompanied by ir parents.

COMMODATIONS: Meals and lodging:

ults ..... US$135
uth: 11-18 years ..... US$ 95
2-10 years ..... US$ 70

accommodation fee for children under 2 unless they use a d in which case the fee is US$40. **Self-contained trailers allowed.**

commodations - Special rates:

uth who sleep in their parents' room with sleeping bags aximum 2 per room):
-18 years ..... US$70
0 years ..... US$30

ease specify on the registration form if so desired.

eals only:
ults and youth 11-18 years ..... US$55
uth 2-10 years ..... US$30

gistration fee due by **June 15.** Full amount to be paid by **July 6.** ll refund for cancellations received in writing by **July 14.**

MIDWEST/EAST COAST MARIAPOLIS

Mansfield, Pennsylvania

July 29, supper to August 4, after breakfast

REGISTRATION FEE

Adults ..... US$100
Married couples attending with
own children under 18 years ..... US$150
(Registration fee for youth not included.)
Youth: 13-17 years ..... US$ 30
2-12 years ..... US$ 25

ACCOMMODATIONS: Meals and lodging:

Adults ..... US$100
Youth: 13-17 years ..... US$100
2-12 years ..... US$ 50

Youth (2-12) should bring linens or sleeping bag, and towels.

Meals only:
Adults ..... US$55
Youth: 13-17 years ..... US$55
2-12 years ..... US$30

40 campsites available on campus—first come, first serve basis —US$6 per night (no hook-ups or dumping facility—shower and washroom facilities within a 3 minute walking distance). Other trailer and tent campsites in nearby area. For reservations and further information, write IMMEDIATELY to Focolare Movement, P.O. Box 496, New York, NY 10021 specifying needs.

Registration fee due by **June 30.** Full amount to be paid by **July 9.** Full refund for cancellations received in writing by **July 16.**

SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION: ☐Spanish.
(Please check if needed and specify number)

I/We will attend the —

- ☐ SOUTHWEST MARIAPOLIS
- ☐ MIDWEST/EAST COAST MARIAPOLIS
- ☐ NORTHWEST MARIAPOLIS

NAME(S) OF PARTICIPANT(S)
[Please indicate age and sex of participant(s) under 18 years of age.]

LAST NAME: _____ **FIRST NAME:**

Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Miss ☐ _____

Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Miss ☐ _____

Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Miss ☐ _____

Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Miss ☐ _____

Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Miss ☐ _____

ADDRESS: _____
Street City

_____
State Zip Tel.

REGISTRATION(S):

single persons $ _____ couple $ _____ Total $ _____

ACCOMMODATIONS:

children $ _____ adults and youth $ _____ Total $ _____

Amount enclosed $ _____

(Please make check payable to Focolare Movement in US$)

If you plan to participate in only a part of the Mariapolis please check below—

DAY OF ARRIVAL: _____
breakfast ☐ lunch ☐ dinner ☐

DAY OF DEPARTURE: _____
breakfast ☐ lunch ☐ dinner ☐

I will come by car and can offer _____ number of seats.

What is the Focolare Movement?

THE BEGINNINGS

FOCOLARE means "hearth," "family fireside." What first strikes people when they come in contact with members of the Focolare, whether in small groups or in large gatherings, is the atmosphere of a family. It is a family formed by many different people in various walks of life. The Focolare Movement is also known as the "Work of Mary." Under this name it was approved by Pope John XXIII in 1962.

The Focolare Movement began in 1943 in Italy. In the midst of the terrible destruction of World War II, Chiara Lubich realized that God is the only one worth living for. As a result, she began to center her life on the Gospel, together with a small group of young women who followed her. Their ideal became one of striving toward the fulfillment of Jesus' last prayer to the Father: "May they all be one" (Jn.17:21).

The life of Chiara and her first companions, and the spiritual way they spontaneously followed, gave rise to the unique form of spirituality of the Focolare Movement, a spirituality of unity. It has proved to be a powerful means of introducing the Gospel into modern life, of going to God together.

WHO ARE THE FOCOLARINI

Single men and women live in separate communities called Focolare Centers. Their principal aim is to achieve unity among themselves through mutual charity practiced twenty-four hours a day. They follow the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience. They work as other laymen and women in regular jobs and professions.

Some married persons, even though continuing to live in their families, participate fully in the life of either the men's or women's Focolare Centers in their common effort to achieve this same unity. They are called "Married Focolarini" and form the backbone of a vast Movement within the Movement, called the New Family Movement.

THE VOLUNTEERS AND THE NEW HUMANITY MOVEMENT

The Volunteers, also called the "Volunteers of God," are a large group within the Focolare Movement; they would like to transform all human realities according to the Gospel spirit. The Volunteers are the backbone of the mass movement called New Humanity. The aim of this Movement is to help form a society made of men and women who are made "new" by the Gospel message and who can then bring new life to all fields of human activity (education, business, etc.). This results in new social relationships which, in turn, lead to the realization of new structures of society.

GEN

The new generations of the Focolare Movement form another Movement or, better, three movements: the Gen 2, the Gen 3 and the Gen 4 Movements, divided according to their various age groups. "Gen" stands for new generation. The Gen have committed themselves to living the Gospel message of love and to sharing with other youth the conviction they have that the Gospel is the answer to every question and the motive for everything they do.

THE MOVEMENT AMONG THE RELIGIOUS

Men and women religious — although they live according to their own rules and constitutions and are already a distinct part of the Church through their religious families — can also be associated with the Focolare.

Contact with the Movement helps them to focus their attention on the specific charism of their founders, and to see how it can be lived in the present time.

PRIESTS — PRIESTS' MOVEMENT —SEMINARIANS — PARISH MOVEMENT

Many diocesan priests are committed to living the spirituality of the Focolare Movement. Some of them live in community. They form the backbone of the Priests' Movement which is made up of priests who live the spirituality of unity.

FOCOLARE FAMILY

The largest group within the Focolare Movement is made up of men, women and young people who are connected with the Movement without having any formal ties with it. Their bond of unity stems from their acceptance of its spirit and their desire to live it.

ECUMENISM

The Movement not only crossed the political boundaries of more than 100 countries, it has also gone beyond the barriers erected for centuries between the various Christian Churches.

Ecumenical activities take place in the different parts of the world where the Movement exists.

In the past few years a promising, ongoing dialogue has been established with faithful of other religions.

SUMMER MARIAPOLIS

Summer meetings are held every year for those interested in the Movement and for those who wish to come into contact with it. For one week persons of all ages and walks of life are exposed to the spirituality of unity. Above all, they strive to practice it by creating among themselves a rapport that molds them into a community. It is intended to be a basic experience of such intense unity that the people will be able to bring it back into their own environments. And this is the most striking fruit of these conventions. They tend to be models of a world which lives according the Gospel.

PERMANENT MARIAPOLIS

The need to prolong the experience of the summer meetings brought about the birth of small cities called Permanent Mariapolis. They are made up of young men and women, as well as whole families, who are there for a designated period of time to be formed according to the Gospel spirit of unity.

They also attend classes in Sacred Scripture, Theology and Sociology and work for their own support.

MARIAPOLIS CENTERS

In addition to the Permanent Mariapolis, there are Mariapolis Centers, which are training centers for the members of the Movement.

FOCOLARE ADDRESSES IN NORTH AMERICA

CHICAGO:
P.O. Box 53426
Chicago, IL 60653

SAN ANTONIO:
P.O. Box 32302
San Antonio. TX 78216

NEW YORK:
P.O. Box 496
New York, NY 10021

BOSTON:
P.O. Box 239
Roslindale, MA 02131

WASHINGTON, DC:
P.O. Box 4958
Washington, DC 20008

LOS ANGELES
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Los Angeles, CA 90071

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